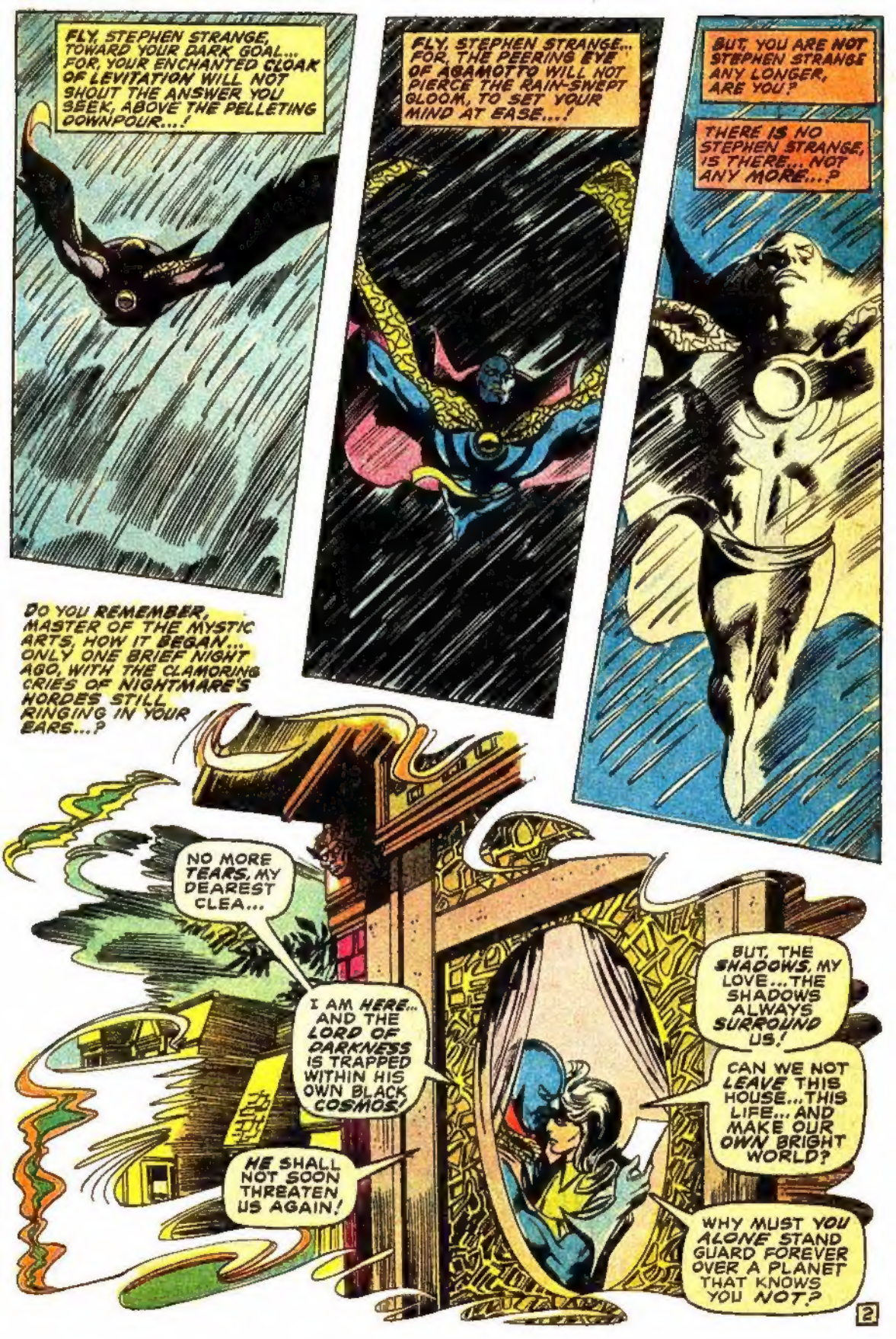
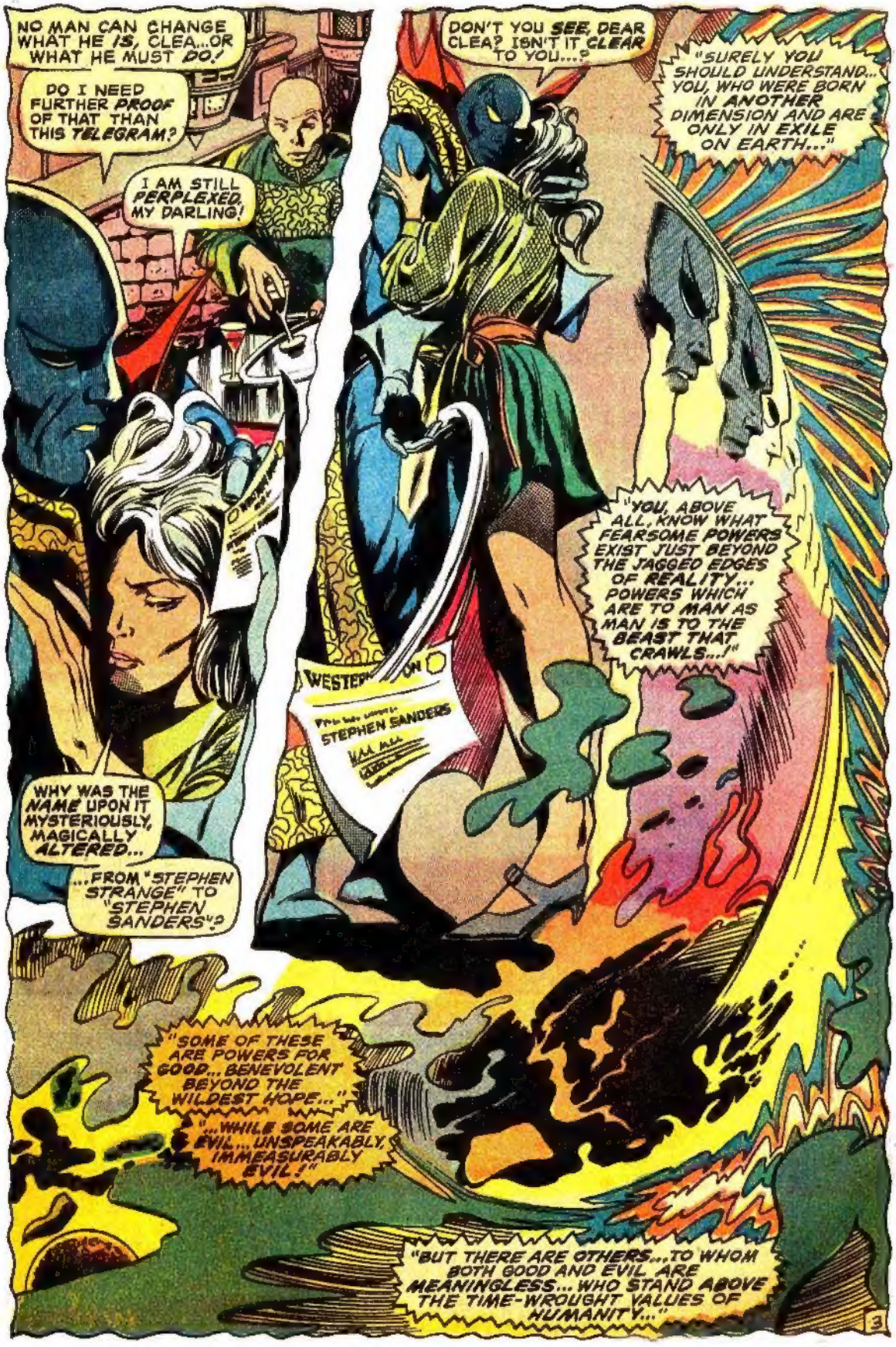
DOCTOR STRANGE
15¢
183
NOV
MASTER OF BLACK MAGIC!
DR. STRANGE
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
BESIEGE THE UNDYING ONES!

Dr. STRANGE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS!...
NEITHER TITAN NOR TEMPEST MUST KEEP ME FROM MY DESTINATION!
BUT, WHEN I REACH IT,.. WHAT SHALL I FIND??
"WE LIVE ON A PLACID ISLAND OF IGNORANCE, IN THE MIDST OF BLACK SEAS OF INFINITY, AND IT WAS NOT MEANT THAT WE SHOULD VOYAGE FAR...!" --H.P. LOVECRAFT (1890-1937).
THEY WALK BY NIGHT!
STAN LEE EDITOR
ROY THOMAS WRITER
GENE COLAN ARTIST
TOM PALMER EMBELLISHER
JEAN IZZO LETTERER


FLY, STEPHEN STRANGE, TOWARD YOUR DARK GOAL... FOR, YOUR ENCHANTED CLOAK OF LEVITATION WILL NOT SHOUT THE ANSWER YOU SEEK, ABOVE THE PELLETING DOWNPOUR...!
FLY, STEPHEN STRANGE... FOR, THE PEERING EYE OF AGAMOTTO WILL NOT PIERCE THE RAIN-SWEPT GLOOM, TO SET YOUR MIND AT EASE...!
BUT, YOU ARE NOT STEPHEN STRANGE ANY LONGER, ARE YOU?
THERE IS NO STEPHEN STRANGE, IS THERE... NOT ANY MORE...?
DO YOU REMEMBER, MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS, HOW IT BEGAN... ONLY ONE BRIEF NIGHT AGO, WITH THE CLAMORING CRIES OF NIGHTMARE'S HORDES STILL RINGING IN YOUR EARS...?
NO MORE TEARS, MY DEAREST CLEA...
I AM HERE... AND THE LORD OF DARKNESS IS TRAPPED WITHIN HIS OWN BLACK COSMOS!
HE SHALL NOT SOON THREATEN US AGAIN!
BUT, THE SHADOWS, MY LOVE... THE SHADOWS ALWAYS SURROUND US!
CAN WE NOT LEAVE THIS HOUSE... THIS LIFE... AND MAKE OUR OWN BRIGHT WORLD?
WHY MUST YOU ALONE STAND GUARD FOREVER OVER A PLANET THAT KNOWS YOU NOT?


NO MAN CAN CHANGE WHAT HE IS, CLEA...OR WHAT HE MUST DO!
DO I NEED FURTHER PROOF OF THAT THAN THIS TELEGRAM?
I AM STILL PERPLEXED, MY DARLING!
WHY WAS THE NAME UPON IT MYSTERIOUSLY, MAGICALLY ALTERED...
...FROM "STEPHEN STRANGE" TO "STEPHEN SANDERS"?
DON'T YOU SEE, DEAR CLEA? ISN'T IT CLEAR TO YOU...?
"SURELY YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND... YOU, WHO WERE BORN IN ANOTHER DIMENSION AND ARE ONLY IN EXILE ON EARTH..."
"YOU, ABOVE ALL, KNOW WHAT FEARSOME POWERS EXIST JUST BEYOND THE JAGGED EDGES OF REALITY... POWERS WHICH ARE TO MAN AS MAN IS TO THE BEAST THAT CRAWLS...!"
STEPHEN SANDERS
"SOME OF THESE ARE POWERS FOR GOOD... BENEVOLENT BEYOND THE WILDEST HOPE..."
"...WHILE SOME ARE EVIL... UNSPEAKABLY, IMMEASURABLY EVIL!"
"BUT THERE ARE OTHERS...TO WHOM BOTH GOOD AND EVIL ARE MEANINGLESS... WHO STAND ABOVE THE TIME-WROUGHT VALUES OF HUMANITY..."

"AND FOREMOST OF THESE AWESOME ENTITIES IS THE ONE CALLED... ETERNITY!"
"HE SAW THAT, IN A DESPERATE MOMENT, I HAD REVEALED MY NAME TO A MILLING CROWD..."
"...AND, HE KNEW HOW VULNERABLE I WOULD BE IF I LIVED ON AS STEPHEN STRANGE...!"
"THUS, HE CHANGED MY NAME... MY VERY IDENTITY... BECAUSE I TRIED TO RESCUE HIM...
*ALL THESE EPOCHAL EVENTS TOOK PLACE IN ISSUES #181-182! --STAN.
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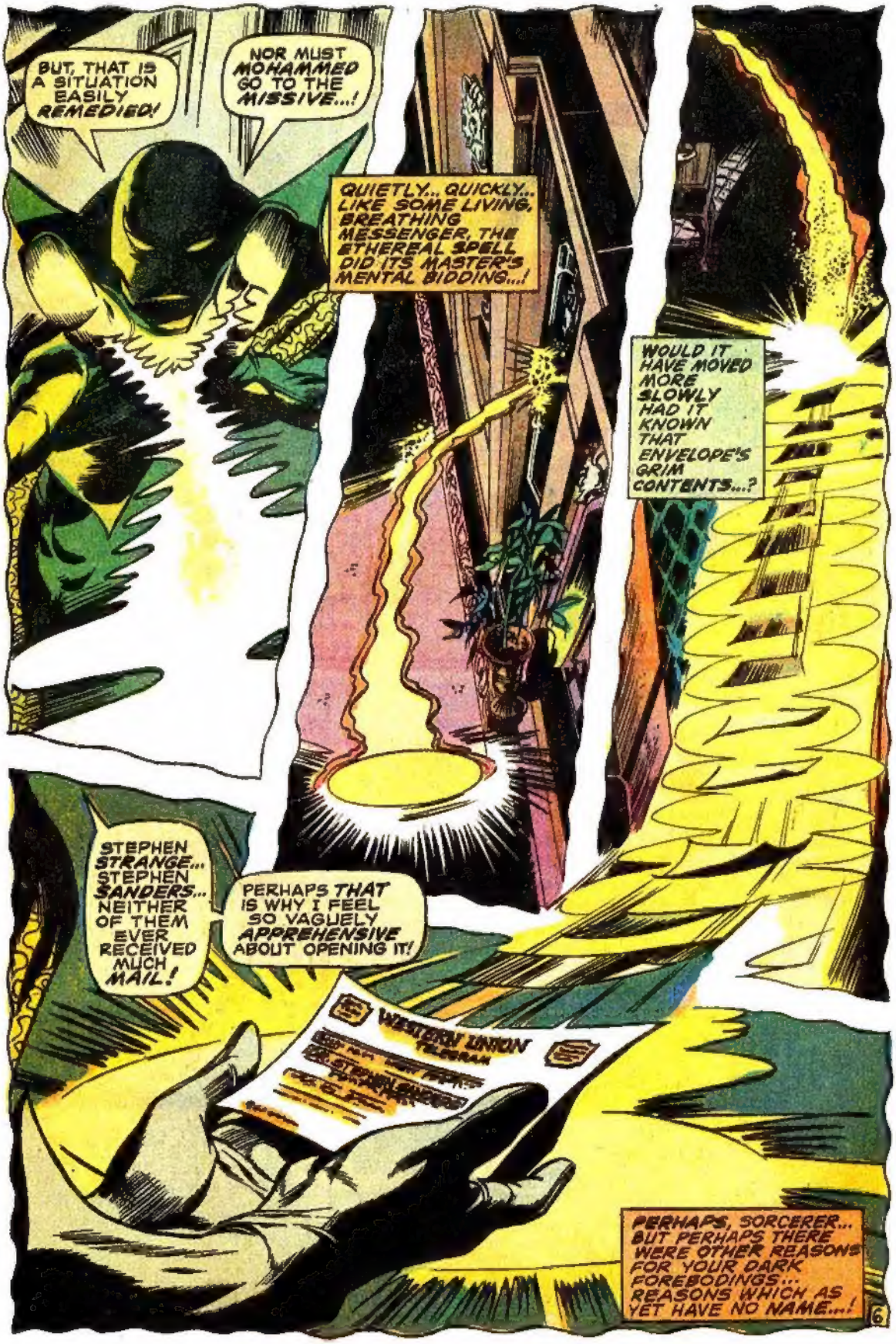
AND, HE DID IT ALL WITH BUT A CASUAL GESTURE!
WHAT A CAVERNOUS ABYSS SEPARATES ETERNITY FROM EVEN THE GREATEST MYSTICS!
IF HE WERE EVIL...OR IF THERE WERE OTHERS EVEN MORE POWERFUL...!
WHAT IS IT, STEPHEN?
YOU STARTED SO SUDDENLY!
IT WAS... NOTHING!
MERELY SOMETHING I MUST CHECK...TO SET MY MIND AT EASE!
WHEN I RETURN, WE'LL SPEAK OF MORE PLEASANT THINGS!
AND, I HOPE YOU'LL DON OTHER CLOTHES!
YOUR SORCERER'S GARB ONLY SERVES AS A GRIM REMINDER...
...OF THE FORCES THAT SEEK TO TEAR US APART!
...HERE IS WHAT I SOUGHT!
JUST AS I IMAGINED!
MEDICAL DIPLOMA
STEPHEN SANDERS
MY MEDICAL DIPLOMA!
...SILENT SOUVENIR OF A WORLD FOREVER GONE!
IN MY CONCERN, THERE IS SOMETHING I FORGOT--
BUT-- WAIT!
I NEVER READ...THE TELEGRAM!!
AND, IF THIS YEARS-OLD PARCHMENT WAS CHANGED...
WHAT WRITTEN RECORD, OR MORTAL MEMORY COULD HAVE ESCAPED ETERNITY'S REACH?


BUT, THAT IS A SITUATION EASILY REMEDIED!
NOR MUST MOHAMMED GO TO THE MISSIVE...!
QUIETLY... QUICKLY... LIKE SOME LIVING, BREATHING MESSENGER, THE ETHEREAL SPELL DID ITS MASTER'S MENTAL BIDDING...!
WOULD IT HAVE MOVED MORE SLOWLY HAD IT KNOWN THAT ENVELOPE'S GRIM CONTENTS...?
STEPHEN STRANGE... STEPHEN SANDERS... NEITHER OF THEM EVER RECEIVED MUCH MAIL!
PERHAPS THAT IS WHY I FEEL SO VAGUELY APPREHENSIVE ABOUT OPENING IT!
WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM
PERHAPS, SORCERER... BUT PERHAPS THERE WERE OTHER REASONS FOR YOUR DARK FOREBODINGS... REASONS WHICH AS YET HAVE NO NAME...!
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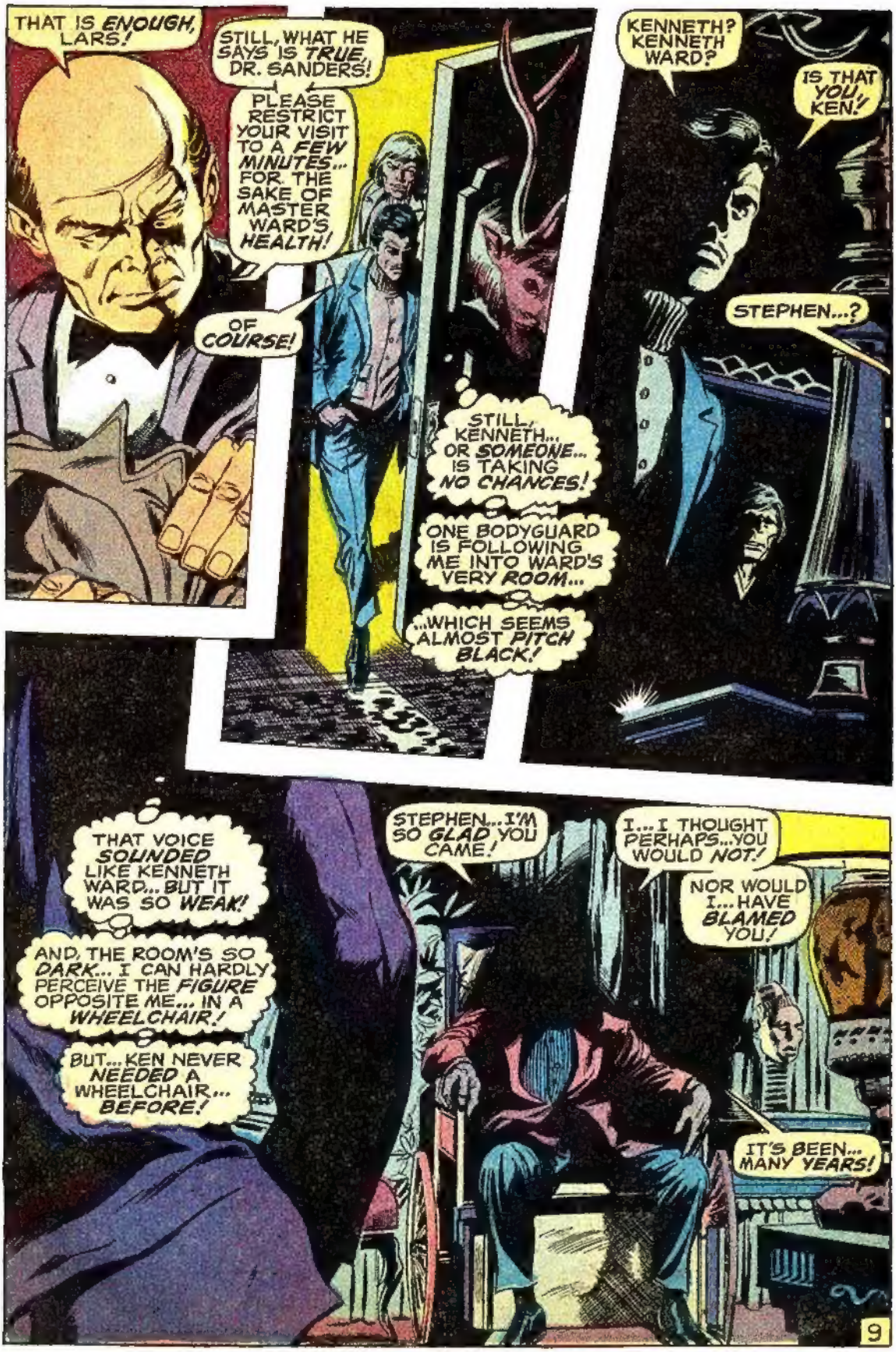
FOR, SOON, YOU FOUND YOURSELF READING THE TELEGRAM TO THE GIRL YOU LOVE... AS IF TO HEAR HER SAY WHAT WAS IN YOUR HEART...!
AN OLD FRIEND SAYS HE NEEDS MY HELP!
HE SAYS HE MUST SEE ME... TOMORROW NIGHT!
A TRAP, PERHAPS... ONE OF YOUR LURKING FOES...!
DON'T GO STEPHEN...
CALL ME WEAK... CALL ME WOMAN... BUT I AM AFRAID...!
YOU DIDN'T MOCK HER FEMININE FEARS, DID YOU, STEPHEN, FOR CLEA WAS A SORCERESS IN ANOTHER WORLD, ANOTHER TIME... AND SUCH AS SHE CAN OFTEN SENSE THE FUTURE...!
...BUT, I COULD NOT IGNORE MY FORMER FRIEND'S PLEA, WHEN TONIGHT CAME 'ROUND!
A SEEMING LIFETIME AGO, KENNETH WARD HELPED SPONSOR MY MEDICAL EDUCATION!
NOT FIEND OR PHANTOM WOULD KEEP ME FROM HIS SIDE IN HIS HOUR OF NEED!
THERE IS HIS SOMBRE BROWNSTONE!
IT STANDS AS PROUD, AS LONELY AS THE SOLITARY MAN WHO OWNS IT!
HOWEVER, I MUST REMEMBER TO BEGIN MY VISIT NOT AS DR. STRANGE...
...BUT AS A MAN NAMED STEPHEN SANDERS!
A NORMAL ENOUGH TYPE...
...IF KENNETH DOESN'T NOTICE THAT I'VE STAYED TOTALLY DRY... WITHOUT AN UMBRELLA!
7

HELLO... I'M DR. SANDERS...!
AH, YES... DO COME IN!
MASTER WARD IS EXPECTING YOU...
UPSTAIRS... IN HIS CHAMBER!
WEIRD... I NEVER KNEW KENNETH TO EMPLOY A FULL-TIME BUTLER!
HE ALWAYS CLAIMED THAT AN EXPLORER SHOULD ANSWER HIS OWN DOORBELLS!
YET, TIME CHANGES ALL MEN... INCLUDING MYSELF!
WHEN I LAST SAW KENNETH, I WAS STILL A PRACTICING SURGEON... NOT A SECRET MYSTIC!
THIS WAY... PLEASE...
AND SO THE MYSTERY THICKENS!
BODYGUARDS YET... STANDING TWO ABREAST IN FRONT OF A SOLID OAK DOOR!
BUT, ARE THEY THERE TO KEEP OTHERS OUT... OR KENNETH IN?
GOOD EVENING, DR. SANDERS!
THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING SO PROMPTLY TO THE MASTER'S TELEGRAM!
HE IS A VERY SICK MAN, YOU KNOW!
8


THAT IS ENOUGH, LARS!
STILL, WHAT HE SAYS IS TRUE, DR. SANDERS!
PLEASE RESTRICT YOUR VISIT TO A FEW MINUTES... FOR THE SAKE OF MASTER WARD'S HEALTH!
OF COURSE!
STILL, KENNETH... OR SOMEONE... IS TAKING NO CHANCES!
ONE BODYGUARD IS FOLLOWING ME INTO WARD'S VERY ROOM...
...WHICH SEEMS ALMOST PITCH BLACK!
KENNETH? KENNETH WARD?
IS THAT YOU, KEN!
STEPHEN...?
THAT VOICE SOUNDED LIKE KENNETH WARD... BUT IT WAS SO WEAK!
AND, THE ROOM'S SO DARK... I CAN HARDLY PERCEIVE THE FIGURE OPPOSITE ME... IN A WHEELCHAIR!
BUT... KEN NEVER NEEDED A WHEELCHAIR... BEFORE!
STEPHEN... I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME!
I... I THOUGHT PERHAPS... YOU WOULD NOT!
NOR WOULD I... HAVE BLAMED YOU!
IT'S BEEN... MANY YEARS!

IT HASN'T BEEN SO MANY YEARS, KEN, THAT I COULD FORGET A FRIEND WHO NEEDED ME!
BUT, WHY THAT WHEELCHAIR... AND WHY THE MYSTERIOUS TELEGRAM?
TELEGRAM? YES... THERE WAS A TELEGRAM!
BUT, I CANNOT REMEMBER WHY I SENT IT...
...ONLY THAT... I HAD TO SEE YOU...!
I FEARED AS MUCH!
IF THAT IS KENNETH, HE'S BEEN DRUGGED... OR WORSE!
I'LL LET THE EYE OF AGAMOTTO... RENDER A SPELL WHICH ONLY I MAY SEE...
...SHOW ME THAT SHADOWED FACE... AND MAKE ITS BEARER SPEAK ONLY TRUTH TO ME...
KENNETH WARD... YOU SENT A TELEGRAM, STATING THAT IT WAS URGENT THAT I VISIT YOU TONIGHT!
WHY DID YOU SEND THAT MESSAGE, KENNETH? WHY?
I... AM SORRY!
I REMEMBER... NOTHING!
NOW...YOU MUST EXCUSE ME!
FOR, I AM TIRED...SO VERY TIRED...!

...I AM SORRY THAT YOUR FIRST AUDIENCE HAD TO BE CUT SO SHORT!
BUT, MASTER WARD HAD AN ACCIDENT ON HIS LAST EXPLORATION, AND THUS...
AN ACCIDENT? WHAT KIND OF ACCIDENT?
THIS WAY, IF YOU PLEASE...!
THE HOUR IS LATE, SO...
I'VE TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF PREPARING A ROOM FOR YOU...!
THAT IS MY FRIEND KENNETH IN THERE... BUT HE'S UNDER SOME SORT OF SPELL!
I CAN'T RESIST LEARNING BY PLAYING ALONG... NO MATTER WHAT THE RISK!
AND I'M BEING LED DOWN THE PRIMROSE PATH... BUT WHERE DOES THAT PATH END?
GOOD NIGHT, SIR...
I TRUST YOU'LL SLEEP WELL!
KLIK
I HARDLY NEED TRY THE DOOR TO KNOW THAT I'M LOCKED IN!
AND YET, I EXPECTED NO LESS!
IN FACT, I HAVE BUT ONE BURNING QUESTION...!
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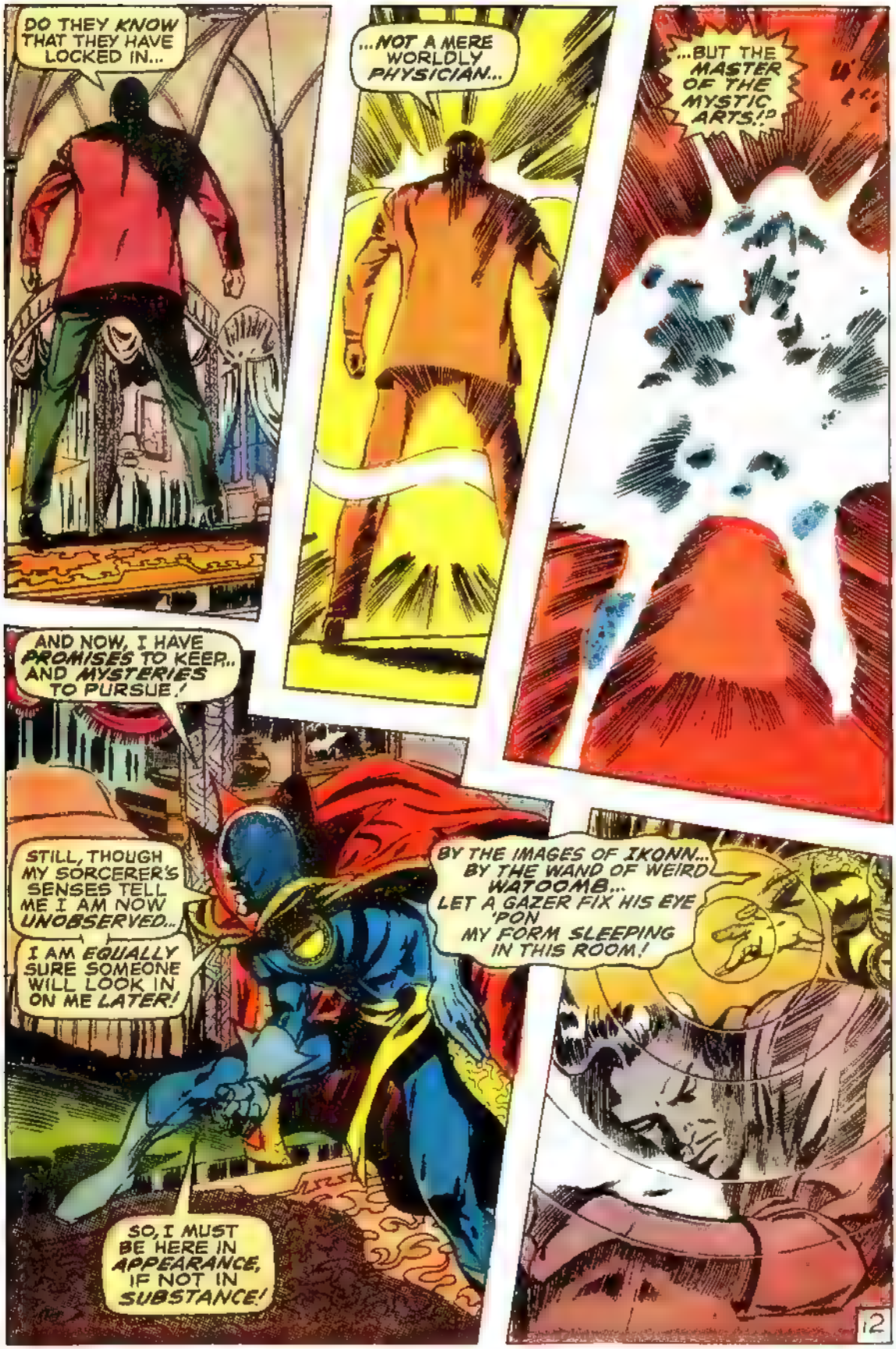
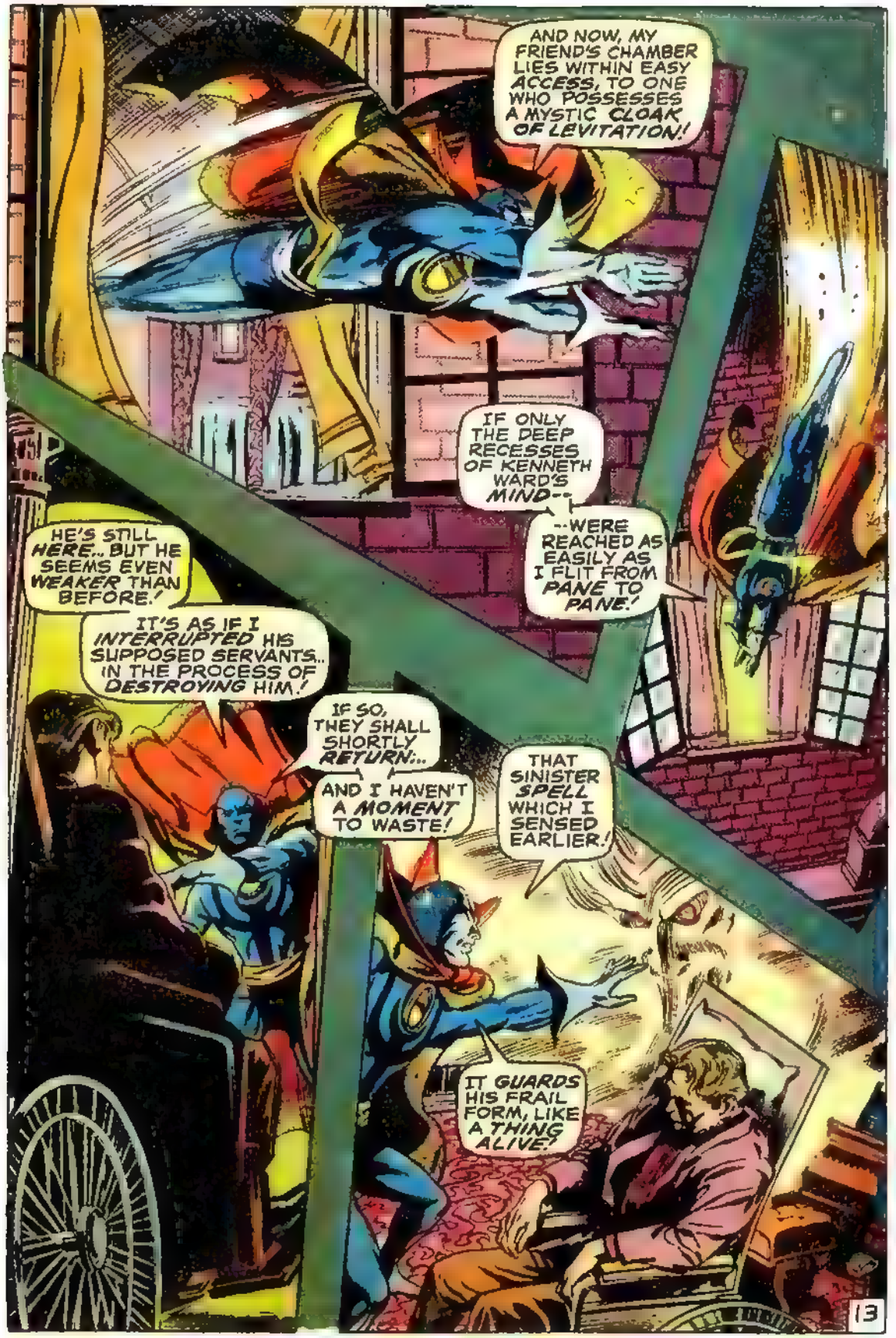
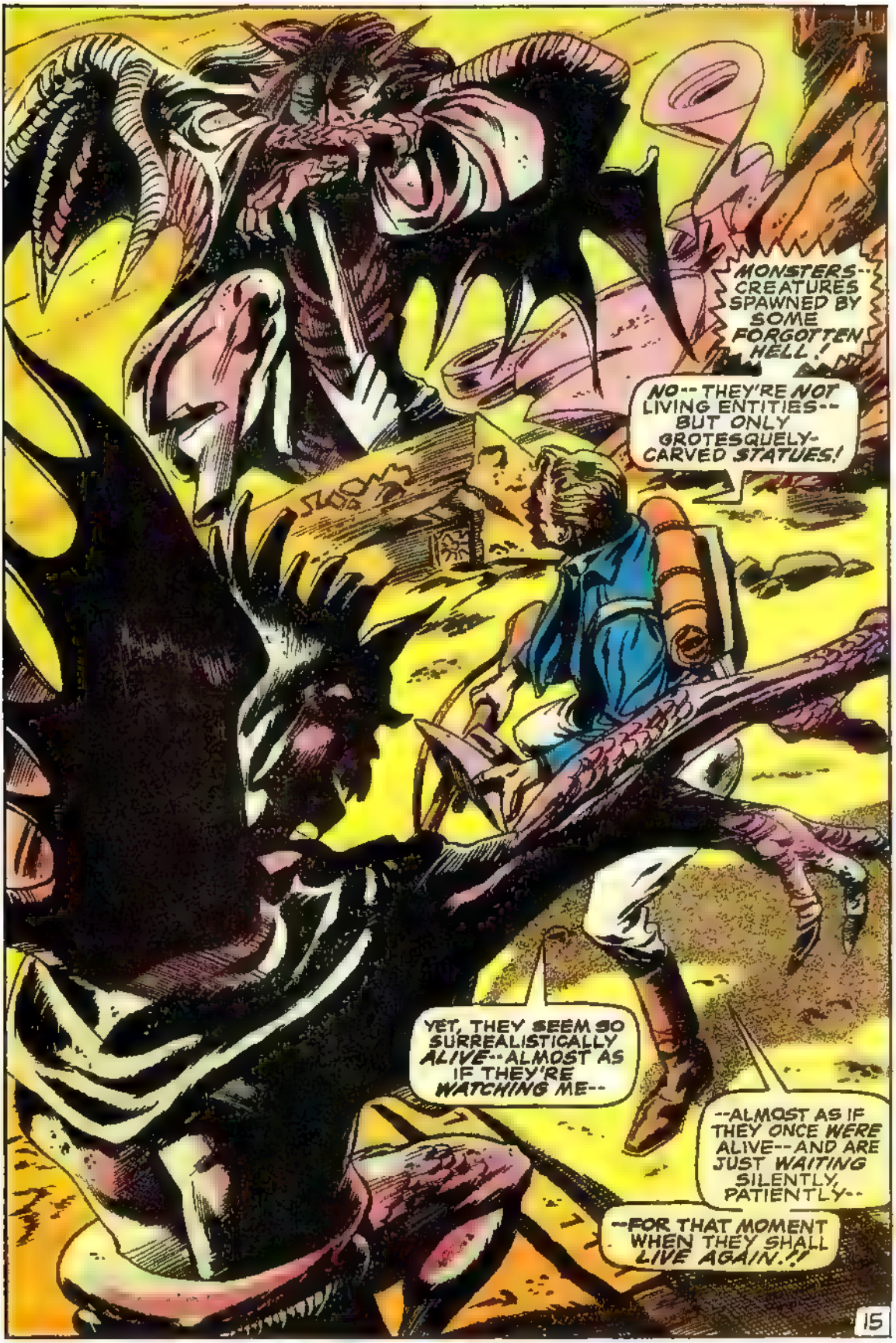

DO THEY KNOW THAT THEY HAVE LOCKED IN...
...NOT A MERE WORLDLY PHYSICIAN...
...BUT THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS!
AND NOW, I HAVE PROMISES TO KEEP.. AND MYSTERIES TO PURSUE!
STILL, THOUGH MY SORCERER'S SENSES TELL ME I AM NOW UNOBSERVED...
I AM EQUALLY SURE SOMEONE WILL LOOK IN ON ME LATER!
SO, I MUST BE HERE IN APPEARANCE, IF NOT IN SUBSTANCE!
BY THE IMAGES OF IKONN... BY THE WAND OF WEIRD WATOOMB... LET A GAZER FIX HIS EYE 'PON MY FORM SLEEPING IN THIS ROOM!
12


AND NOW, MY FRIEND'S CHAMBER LIES WITHIN EASY ACCESS, TO ONE WHO POSSESSES A MYSTIC CLOAK OF LEVITATION!
IF ONLY THE DEEP RECESSES OF KENNETH WARD'S MIND--
--WERE REACHED AS EASILY AS I FLIT FROM PANE TO PANE!
HE'S STILL HERE.. BUT HE SEEMS EVEN WEAKER THAN BEFORE!
IT'S AS IF I INTERRUPTED HIS SUPPOSED SERVANTS.. IN THE PROCESS OF DESTROYING HIM!
IF SO, THEY SHALL SHORTLY RETURN...
AND I HAVEN'T A MOMENT TO WASTE!
THAT SINISTER SPELL WHICH I SENSED EARLIER!
IT GUARDS HIS FRAIL FORM, LIKE A THING ALIVE!

BUT, IT WAS NOT DESIGNED TO COUNTER ANOTHER SPELL, FROM WITHOUT!
BEFORE MY OWN, IT FADES LIKE DARKNESS IN THE WARM LIGHT OF DAWN!
KENNETH WARD.. NOW DO YOU REMEMBER WHY YOU SUMMONED STEPHEN SANDERS TO YOU?
REMEMBER? NO... I DON'T...
WAIT! I THINK...
YES...
NOW... I REMEMBER...
SOMETHING COMPELS ME... TO TELL THE WHOLE STORY...
...FROM THE BEGINNING...!
"IT WAS IN ASIA THAT I FOUND IT... THERE, IN A LONELY VALLEY BETWEEN HIMALAYAN PEAKS...!"
IT'S HERE... JUST AS MY FANTASTIC DREAM TOLD ME IT WOULD BE.. JUST AS I SOMEHOW KNEW IT WOULD BE!
WEIRD GEOMETRIC FORMS... CARVED BY NO HUMAN CIVILIZATION!
AND THERE... BEYOND THOSE FORMS... AS IF STEPPING FROM MY NIGHTMARE...


MONSTERS--CREATURES SPAWNED BY SOME FORGOTTEN HELL!
NO--THEY'RE NOT LIVING ENTITIES--BUT ONLY GROTESQUELY-CARVED STATUES!
YET, THEY SEEM SO SURREALISTICALLY ALIVE--ALMOST AS IF THEY'RE WATCHING ME--
--ALMOST AS IF THEY ONCE WERE ALIVE--AND ARE JUST WAITING SILENTLY, PATIENTLY--
--FOR THAT MOMENT WHEN THEY SHALL LIVE AGAIN.!!

BUT, MY IMAGINATION'S RUNNING AWAY WITH ME!
STILL, THEY DO ALMOST SEEM TO BE STANDING GUARD...
...OVER THIS MACABRE, MINIATURE IDOL BETWEEN THEM...!
WHAT'S THAT SOUND--?
KRAAK!!
NOOOO!!
"HOWEVER, THAT WAS A QUESTION THAT HAD NO ANSWER...AND SO, I RETURNED WITH THE SMALLER IDOL TO THIS HOUSE...ONLY TWO NIGHTS AGO...!"
NOW I KNOW-- WHY IT FASCINATED ME SO-- BEYOND ALL REASON!
AND YET, I WISH I HAD NOT DECIPHERED THE ANCIENT INSCRIPTION ON ITS BASE--
--AN INSCRIPTION WHICH MAKES ME FEAR-- FOR ALL HUMANITY!!
THAT LARGE STATUE FELL-- MISSED ME BY INCHES!
BUT-- WHY DID IT FALL NOW? WHY NOW??
16

"THEN, LAST NIGHT, AFTER I HAD SENT A TELEGRAM TO... STEPHEN SANDERS..."
THREE CREATURES OF THE NIGHT, KENNETH WARD...
"WE WHO SERVE... "THE UNDYING ONES"!
I REMEMBER... NO MORE!
THAT NOISE-- WHO'S THERE??
THREE, DID YOU SAY? THEN, THEY MUST BE--
--THEY WHO WELCOMED YOU TONIGHT TO THIS HOUSE, MEDDLER!
THE SAME ONES WHO SHALL SEE-- THAT YOU NEVER LEAVE!
YOU--AS I SUSPECTED!
BUT, I'LL LET THE GLOW OF THE EYE OF AGAMOTTO--
--SHOW ME THE TRUE FACES BEHIND THOSE MASKS!
FOR, MASKS I SENSE THAT THEY ARE!
MY PREMONITION ...WAS CORRECT!
BENEATH THE GLOW, YOU BECOME HIDEOUS GARGOYLES...MERE MOCKERIES OF HUMANITY!
DO WHAT YOU WISH, MORTAL!
YOU SHALL NOT ALTER YOUR FATE THEREBY!
YOU SHALL NOT MAKE THAT COMPARISON FOR LONG, FOOL!
BUT, BEFORE THAT, THERE SHALL BE--NO DOCTOR STRANGE!
FOR, SOON, THERE SHALL BE NO "HUMANITY"!
17

YOU KNOW WHO I AM.!!
THEN YOUR POWERS ARE BEYOND WHAT I HAD IMAGINED.!
BUT-- WHAT DO YOU SEEK HERE?
THE IDOL.!
THEY WANT--THE IDOL.!
AND, WE SHALL HAVE IT, MORTAL.!
YOUR EVERY EFFORT TO DEFEAT US--
--SHALL BUT BRING YOU CLOSER TO YOUR OWN DEATH.!
THEY ASSAULT ME WITH SPELLS SUCH AS I HAVE NEVER BEFORE ENCOUNTERED!
MUST HAVE TIME-- TIME TO THINK--!
ATTACK, MY BROTHERS-- ATTACK!
AND, I SHALL GAIN THAT TIME--
18

--WITH THE AID OF THE ILLUSIONS OF IKONN!
THE VERY ROOM FILLS WITH MIRROR IMAGES OF THE MORTAL!
--BY DESTROYING THEM ALL, WITH A SINGLE SHATTERING SPELL!
WE CAN STILL TRIUMPH OVER SUCH TRICKERY, FOOL--
IT IS OBVIOUS THEY ARE ONLY MENIALS--MERE AGENTS OF SOME HIGHER EVIL!
YET, THEIR POWERS EQUAL MY OWN!
STILL, I GAINED THE TIME I NEEDED... IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE!
AS THE THREE DARK SHADES DETECT ME, MAY THE SERAPHIM DIRECT ME... MAY THEY SHIELD ME AND PROTECT ME...!
LET THE SHROUDING NIGHT BE GONE-- LET THE LOATHSOME PIT-BORN SPAWN..
19

--STAND BEFORE ME-- 'MIDST THE DAWN!
HE RIPS THE CURTAINS FROM THE WINDOW--
THE ROOM IS FLOODED--WITH THE SUNLIGHT WHICH WE DREAD!
THE HUMAN SENSED--OUR FATAL WEAKNESS --AND MADE OF IT A WEAPON AGAINST US--!
YES, DEMONS!
YOU SAID YOU WERE CREATURES OF THE NIGHT--
AND I TOOK YOU AT YOUR WORD!
YOU THINK-- YOU HAVE WON -- BECAUSE WE DIE--!
KENNETH...!?
BUT THERE SHALL BE OTHERS--WHO SHALL FIND WHAT WE SOUGHT!
BEWARE THE WRATH OF--THE UNDYING ONES--!
THEY'RE GONE... TURNED TO DUST BY THE MORNING SUN!
...SOMETHING NONE BUT KENNETH CAN TELL ME!
BUT NOW, I MUST LEARN WHY THEY SOUGHT THEIR LOST IDOL...
HE'S-- DEAD!
THE STRAIN OF BATTLE-- OF RESISTANCE--WAS TOO GREAT FOR HIS FIGHTING HEART!
THEN, DR. STRANGE SHALL FIND THE MYSTIC IDOL--AND CARRY ON THE STRUGGLE HE BEGAN--
IN THE NAME OF KENNETH WARD--AND OF AN ENTIRE WORLD!!
NEXT: THE SEARCHERS!